

Missouri Soybeans

January 31, 2006

Mr. Kenneth R. Payne, Chief
Marketing Programs, Livestock and Seed Program
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Agriculture Marketing Service
Room 2638-S, Stop 0251
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20250-0251
Email: soybeancomments@usda.gov

Re: Docket number LS-05-07, concerning the Soybean Promotion and Research Order (7 CFR 1220)

Dear Mr. Payne:

The Missouri Soybean Association (MSA) appreciates the opportunity to offer comments on the review of Soybean Checkoff Order. MSA believes the national soybean checkoff program is fair in that all soybean producers nationwide invest in the promotion and research of this versatile crop.

Established as part of the 1990 Farm Bill, the soybean checkoff has delivered on its promise of building greater demand for U.S. soybeans and soybean products. Since its inception, the soybean checkoff has resulted in a climb from \$11 billion in 1990 to \$18 billion in 2003—a 64 percent increase—in the total value of the soybean crop. Not surprisingly, domestic and international demand for U.S. soybeans steadily increased to record levels during the same time period.

Likewise, checkoff resources have been applied to develop new and innovative methods to utilize our crop. Biodiesel and other soy-based products have found their way into the marketplace, creating new opportunities for soybean farmers to capture a greater share of the value of the crop we produce.

While MSA is considered part of the American Soybean Association (ASA), we do not fully support all the claims and requests provided in their comment letter. Specifically,

- MSA supports improved oversight and better resolution of conflicts, especially between the two national soybean organizations, ASA and the United Soybean Board (USB). Poor relations between state and national soybean organizations undermine checkoff program effectiveness at both levels.

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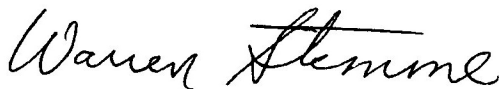
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- Regarding the calling of a referendum on the soybean checkoff program, MSA differs with ASA's position. As the referendum education process takes considerable time and resources, the up-or-down vote would be costly and expensive to implement, and it would also detract from positive work being done. MSA is comfortable with having the poll of soybean producers conducted periodically to determine the need for a referendum.
- MSA also does not have a problem with the current way USB directors are selected.

On behalf of members of the Missouri Soybean Association, I thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the effectiveness and operations of the national soybean checkoff program.

Sincerely,

MISSOURI SOYBEAN ASSOCIATION

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Warren Stemme". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Warren Stemme

President